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Abstract of the Invention

The present invention relates to a cosmetic or pharmaceutical composition comprising, in a physiologically acceptable medium, a purified natural or synthetic epidermis-specific polypeptide which is involved in horny layer cell cohesion. The invention also relates to a cosmetic or pharmaceutical composition comprising a mixture of polypeptides derived from the proteolysis of the purified polypeptide of the present invention. The present invention further relates to a method for strengthening horny layer cell cohesion which comprises applying the cosmetic or pharmaceutical composition of the present invention to the skin. Finally, the present invention relates to a method for reducing horny layer cell cohesion, and thereby promoting exfoliation, wherein said method comprises applying to the skin a cosmetic or pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of at least one protease active on the polypeptide of the present invention.